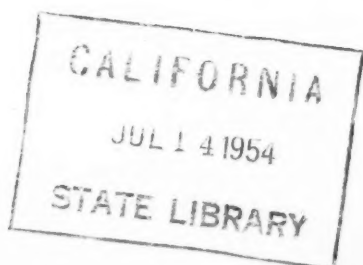



CANADIAN ART



OTTAWA

VOL. XI. NO. 4 SUMMER 1954

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CANADIAN ART

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The Collection of John A. MacAulay of Winnipeg

DONALD W. BUCHANAN

EMILY CARR

Wind in the Tree Tops



CANADIAN collectors of art have usually been of two kinds; those who concentrated on acquiring European masters of note (the most successful here was the late Sir William Van Horne of C.P.R. fame) and those who preferred to devote themselves entirely to encouraging Canadian painting (the lead here has been taken by J. S. McLean of Toronto). John A. MacAulay, Q.C., of Winnipeg, however, is of a rarer type; he wants to have paintings from both Canada and abroad and he attempts to maintain a catholic range of choice in his acquisitions. So he has eagerly purchased various examples of both European and Canadian art from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries. In his home on Wellington Crescent it is possible to see a Corot and a Romney in the entrance hall, a Turner and several Renoirs in the reception room, and, in

the living-room, a Tom Thomson and a Morrice side by side with the works of younger Canadians such as Goodridge Roberts.

A public gallery when it buys a painting and afterwards finds its first judgment is not standing the test of time often has no way out except to relegate its mistakes to the basement. In common with all collectors, including museum curators, Mr. MacAulay has made occasional errors of choice. But, being a man possessed of decisive initiative, he has been able to recover quickly by selling his less likely choices or by exchanging them for better works. So from this process, which has been continuous over twenty-five years or so, this fine collection has emerged. The process actually has been a little like that of carefully cultivating a garden, weeding out, replanting, with a few additions now and then

to widen and enrich the variety of the showing. Today he has about one hundred paintings of which some sixty are Canadian.

To honour his achievement as a collector, the National Gallery of Canada recently selected 51 of these to be hung in Ottawa during April and May of this year.

As for individual works, he has one of the best small oil sketches by Tom Thomson in existence and several equally good oil sketches by Lawren Harris; his *Cornelius Krieghoff Sillery Cove, Quebec*, is important both historically and artistically; his *Dulwich College* by the French impressionist, Camille Pissarro, is one of the finer works of that master's English period; his Van Gogh is a good example from the sombre early period of that artist; finally, his *Moorland Landscape with Sunset* by Innes, although a highly individual choice, is at the same time a rare prize in contemporary English art.

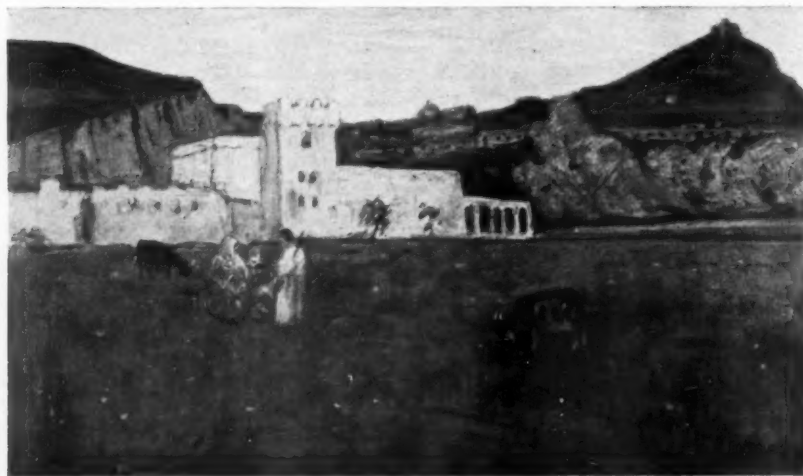
So much for the highlights. There is also plenty of variety. For example, one is surprised to discover hanging beside the meticulous flower paintings of Fantin-Latour, the gay, almost anarchic, insouciance of a Raoul Dufy water colour of a harvest scene in France. Such contrasts bespeak a collector who has had the courage of his convictions and who has not been afraid to mix the sweet and the sour, the sedate and the frivolous, in due proportions. This would have been even more evident to the spectator in Ottawa, if the Jack Humphrey water colour he owns had been

hung beside the colder, less alive but yet authentically Laurentian landscape of Maurice Cullen, or if those colour-in-atmosphere effects of Joe Plaskett's romantic pastel studies had been set beside the carefully executed colour-in-detail of *The Woodcutter* by Clarence A. Gagnon. Unfortunately, only oil paintings by Canadians were sent to Ottawa and these gayer Canadian works in other media, which help to give spice to Mr. MacAulay's collection, were not seen in Ottawa.

Personally, I was unexpectedly attracted to that delicate flower-piece, hesitating between dream and reality, painted by the French artist, Odilon Redon. I remember, too, most pleasantly, a Canadian work by Mabel May, an interesting use of cubist means to obtain a solid but yet femininely soft landscape. Not a masterpiece but singularly attractive was also a small Renoir sketch, in which that great French master had used warm flesh tones to depict the garden and buildings of his hilltop home in Cagnes overlooking the Mediterranean.

Not least in interest were the five choice works by Canada's greatest master, James Wilson Morrice, and a number of small but delicate and spontaneously executed oil panels of English landscape by that English forerunner of the modern movement in art, John Constable. Those two groupings alone would have made a collection of merit in themselves. Winnipeg can well be proud of Mr. MacAulay as an art collector.

J. W. MORRICE. *Les environs de Tanger*



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PIERRE-AUGUSTE
RENOIR

*Deux filles
à la plage*



ODILON REDON

*Bouquet de fleurs
des champs*

A New Consciousness of Form

JOHN KORNER

Concerning the author of this article, his fellow painter J. L. Shadbolt writes: "John Korner is specific, persistent, and alert to the widest implications of our social experience; he has had the advantage of growing up in Europe in a highly civilized cultural climate. Living in Vancouver for the past 15 years, he has broken from the old world cocoon into our Canadian reality . . . he is symptomatic of a new kind of artist in Canada, alive to a complexity arising out of our present interpretive demands as a world-minded nation . . . On any objective count, he is a superbly subtle colourist. If he has a weakness, it is a certain tentativeness. But he works small, in several media, both liquid and opaque, in pure line or graded tone, in fact, in no predictable way. He is seismic. He records tremors. Such tremors sometimes are prophetic."

To "understand" the art of our time one must first acquire an awareness of the changes in the world around us. Because the artist is endowed with an acute sensitivity, if not always with the limiting point of view of common sense, he is likely to absorb (even subconsciously to anticipate) new occurrences faster than most of his contemporaries. He distinctly realizes the spirit of our time and builds his plastic forms within it. His product is an expression of an individual experience related to the world around us.

The culture of our time is becoming increasingly unified, perhaps not through a set of philosophical and religious concepts but rather through our common experience of the bewildering tempo of change. New forms are needed to express our reaction to a world of rapid development in science and techniques, for which its creator, man himself, is not yet either physically or psychologically equipped. While the most radical changes have taken place only within the last hundred years, the parallel process of human adjustment may take many thousands of years.

It is obviously futile to expect the artist of today to use the art forms of yesterday. (They can only serve as a basis for his search for new forms and new meaning.) How can his concern with reality in the traditional sense persist when reality itself has become more and more questionable?

Twenty-three centuries ago the Greek philosopher Democritus wrote: "Sweet and bitter, cold and warm, as well as all the colours, all these things exist but in opinion and not in

reality. What really exists are unchangeable particles and their motions in empty space." Only a decade ago it looked as if the findings of modern science had brought us back over the centuries to accept the philosophy of Democritus again. But even his "unchangeable particles" are now no longer real. The particles themselves have been dissolved by the latest

JOHN KORNER. *Fogbound. Casein*



JOHN KORNER
Sleep of Rock II
Ink

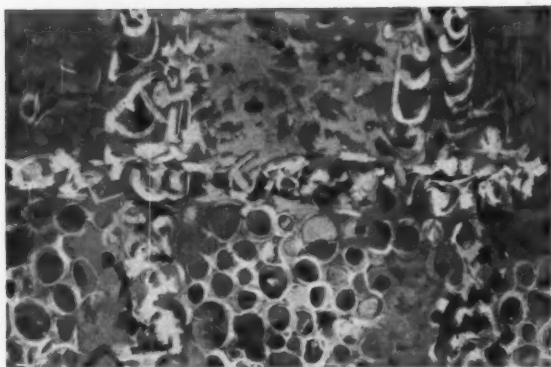


discoveries of the scientists and we are left for the time being with a physical world which, to sum up presently accepted theories, is completely in flux.

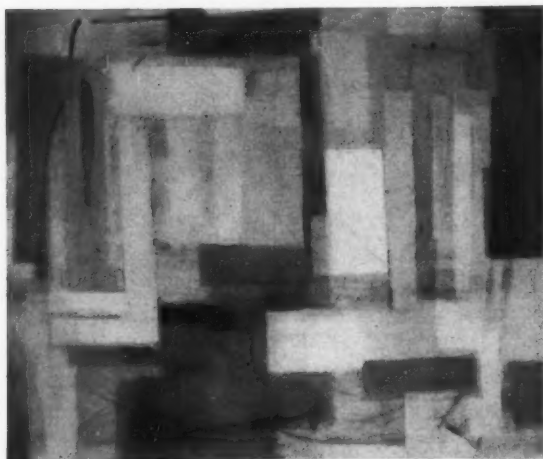
Hence it has not been surprising that science, unable to describe reality in the metaphors of classical physics, should have moved from mechanical explanation towards mathematical abstraction. Pure mathematics can claim to be the most original creation of the human spirit. Through it, connections between things are exhibited which are extremely unobvious to perception through our senses. The parallel in contemporary art seems obvious when one considers its retreat from literal rendering of "reality" into the realm of symbolism and abstraction. Although the artist's aim is not the presentation of ideas, still he tries to communicate his emotional reaction to ideas. In this way the artist expresses, by plastic means,

his concept of life in the world around him, be it an experience of heart or mind or both.

But, the world around us, including Man, seems to be the product of both evolution and retrogression, development and extinction, which, if planned, shows no comprehensible reason. It seems void of meaning and without detectable purpose. Within the deadly expanses of our solar system all labour, all aspirations, seem destined to the same annihilation. Ever since Man first appeared in the universe, he has been faced with the powerless wonder we still feel today. The certainty of death is still common to him as to other creatures, yet during his brief years he is free to acquire knowledge, to criticize, to imagine, to create. This freedom is only his, and in it lies his superiority to that blind nature he is forever subject to. In the world of ideas, in the will to form and to create, he is free,—free from

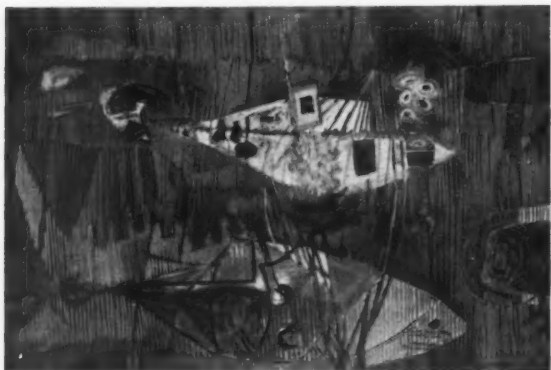


TAKAO TANABE. *Fragment 35*



LIONEL THOMAS. *The Dictator*

J. L. SHADBOLT. *Sea Floor. Ink and gouache*



his fellow men, free from *terra firma* on which all human bodies crawl.

This freedom also contains the choice: to respect and to submit to the powers of nature in slavish submission, or to gather the determination to recognize only the God created by our own love of the good, constantly to defy a hostile universe, and to reject the evil of blind force, which is unworthy of our worship.

Through this exercise of his freedom, he is able to transform the unconscious universe through his own imagination into a new image.

This approach could be called "creative realism," and seems to be the most "realistic" way in which mind can assert mastery over the inchoate flux of the natural universe. Here is then the foundation on which the art of today can be firmly based.

As it did in all periods of the past, our art will show traces of our time's inner mood, its restlessness, its conflicts, and also in some instances a personal vision of a more stoic kind. It will necessarily rely less on material values than, for example, the art of the Renaissance with its emphasis on the heroic stature of man. It will have to translate the state of our world into new forms, and these will lead to further enlargement of human experiences. These new experiences which are evoked through the creation of the artist himself will in turn lead to new meanings.

That is why the artist of today must be preoccupied with the two basic problems: Form and Meaning. Form can stand alone, as an abstract limit to space or as a boundary between surfaces. That is its external meaning. But it also has its internal significance. In this sense every form is the outward expression of an inner meaning the artist has to convey. The freer the abstract form (or semi-abstract form), the purer and more primeval will be its impact.

Note: The three paintings reproduced on this page demonstrate how some other Vancouver artists are likewise concerned, to quote Korner's phrase, "with a new consciousness of form today." These three works were among a selection of Canadian paintings shown recently in the Canadian exhibit at the II Biennial of Sao Paulo, Brazil, and later in Caracas, Venezuela, in the exhibition of contemporary art held during the Tenth Inter-American Conference there this spring.

Of the infinite aspects of form, there is still much to be explored, flexibility, direction in the picture, the relative weight of the more abstract or the more concrete and their combination, the grouping, the static and the rhythmic, the geometric and the organic and so on. Certainly we are dealing with a new consciousness of form today.

Familiarity with the language of pure form will eventually be acquired by more and more of those who now are still baffled by it.

Now as to meaning. When we ask what constitutes meaning, we are not asking what is the meaning of this or that gesture or word or picture or sound. Each of these may call up an idea of something else. When this happens, what is now perceived may be called a "symbol" and the "idea" which it calls up may be called its meaning. So, an egg-shaped line gives us the meaning of "egg".

Just as it is necessary to acquaint ourselves with visual symbols, so it is useful to realize the sort of thing a symbol may mean. When

we are clear as to what a symbol is, in its physical aspect, and as to what sort of thing it can mean, then we are in a better position to discover the relation of the two, which is meaning.

It is of course absurd to ask what an artist "really" means by his work. He himself would find different meanings in it at different times and at different stages of his own development. Familiar symbols produce commonplace forms. On the other hand the creation of new arrangements of form and meaning will appear "meaningless" as long as they remain unfamiliar.

That is why contemporary art is harder to grasp. A definite grasp of it by the spectator requires greater familiarity with the language the artist is using. The impulse, which drove him to create in a new idiom, will, with time, become a more commonly known experience, but only as mankind adjusts itself to the changing universe and begins to comprehend the as yet inarticulate spirit of our time.

New Stamps for Old

LAURENCE HYDE

WHEN Sir Sandford Fleming, a Toronto architect, designed Canada's first postage stamp in 1851 the task of engraving the printing plates was entrusted to Messrs. Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson, a New York firm of bank note engravers who were later merged with the American Bank Note Company. A subsidiary, the Canadian Bank Note Company, still engraves and prints the majority of Canadian postage stamps.

In 1851 line engraving on steel was at a peak of popularity that may never be reached again. A hand process undertaken by only the most skilled craftsman, line engraving was at that time unchallenged as a method of reproducing all forms of "security" printing by world governments. Today photo-mechanical methods of plate making are rapidly replacing the steel engraver in many countries including craft-conscious Britain where photogravure is used for all stamps of common denomination. The United States Bureau of Engraving and Printing, a one-time stronghold of line

engraving, if ever there was one, has just placed an order for a trial stamp to be printed in several colours by photogravure. Because Canada has long felt uneasy regarding her stamp designs and because printing and reproductive methods are important factors in determining their final appearance, the backwash from this wave of controversy is just now being felt here. Whether or not our few remaining steel engravers will vanish in the undertow remains to be seen.

Outside the ever narrowing field of government printing needs, steel engraving has become something of a lost art. Thus, a decline similar to that of wood engraving in the late nineteenth century is not likely to be arrested by a group of talented amateurs aware of the medium's inherent worth, as was luckily the case with wood engraving. Other than the few "professional" engravers employed by bank note companies, or federal agencies, the art has few practitioners. Reasons are not hard to find, the main one, of course, being eco-



After the artist has completed his drawing in suitable form for the engraver to follow, he becomes entirely dependent upon the skill of the engraver to render the design satisfactorily. This combination of talents has worked out happily in this new 15c stamp designed by Laurence Hyde

nomic. With the decline of interest in buying steel engravings for private collections, the steel engraver had but few outlets for his work. An engraved steel plate must be printed on a special press totally and utterly unlike the common letterpress that will print a type high wood block as readily as type. Thus, the vital elements of survival, convenience and adaptability are quite missing from steel line engraving. Publishers, long an important buyer of the engraved steel plate, have long since ceased to be even faintly interested in illustrations that cannot be printed in the same press and at the same time as the type. All acknowledge the beauty of metal engraving; none use it except for expensive limited editions.

The process is considered by many as the only one really fitted to produce postage stamps. Among this loyal band of supporters the prospect of photogravure as a substitute for the grand old method is blood chilling. The arguments in favour of steel engraving are not without validity. Whereas photogravure is often sooty and smudgy, a steel en-

graved stamp has a gem-like quality. Indeed the slight embossed effect of intaglio printing lends an air of quality, prestige and value not easily attained by any other means. Aside from this atmosphere of dignified and solid worth (always useful in a nation's currency) steel engravings are impossible to counterfeit successfully. Most counterfeit bills and stamps are photo-mechanical reproductions since there are probably no counterfeiters living capable of re-engraving a new steel plate by hand with exactly and precisely the same lines as the original. Photogravure will reproduce almost any kind of art work or photograph in a more or less satisfactory manner depending on the quality of equipment and operators. Lacking the "feel" of quality found in engraving, photogravure has undoubted advantages of its own. The softness of gravure is pleasing to many while its adaptability to colour printing is a feature not found in the older medium.

If the Karsh photograph of Queen Elizabeth had been reproduced on our Canadian stamps by photogravure (an ideal process for repro-

ducing photographs) the result would be an exact copy,—no more, no less. Her Majesty would appear in miniature looking no better or no worse than the original photograph. The full responsibility would tend to rest on the Queen or Karsh, or both. Good portrait engravers, on the other hand, are now exceedingly rare. According to an American Philatelic Society Handbook published in 1939 there was at that time no more than twenty men in the world capable of engraving a portrait head on a stamp. When one considers the time necessary for training, between 10 and 15 years, and the chances of making the grade only being one in a hundred, one can easily understand the reluctance of younger men to take up the torch.

Whether or not Queen Victoria looked like the charming portrait on the twelve penny black of 1852 (one of the world's rare stamps and worth over \$2,000 to collectors) is hard to say. But we can be fairly sure that Canadians of that day were quite satisfied. In 1852 it was sufficient for a Queen's portrait to look queenly and attractive. Above all she had to look regal even if the designer must needs give her a Greek nose and a stylized look that would, in all likelihood, be quite unacceptable today. This factor of public demand for a photographic quality, a result of picture magazines, movies and television having made public figures more familiar to the eye, has been a contributing factor in the decline of portrait engraving as an interpre-

tive rather than a reproductive art. If reproductive qualities alone are needed in a portrait then mechanical means of reproducing them are certainly more efficient. As surely as the human hand is corrupted by the de-humanizing influence and demands of mechanical "realism" so will the machine step in and take over what is rightly the province of the machine and so leave the artisan without a shirt to his back and naked to his enemies. "Art", of course, is the shirt.

If the North American engraver had any qualities other than a supreme ability to engrave the Lord's Prayer or the Declaration of Independence on the head of a pin, his friends would be better armed to fight a better fight in his favour. Looking at the postage stamps of the United States, in particular, one is forced to conclude that steel engraving, as practised today, without art, without thought, with nothing but a sugary "boiler-plate" substitute for design, that steel engraving, in this sense, is its own worst enemy.

The artistic quality of Canadian stamps has varied enormously over the years. The earliest stamps are notable for a quiet dignity quite in keeping with the Victorian age. They have an air of honest worth. Designed and engraved by the American Bank Note Company of New York, the 1860 Nova Scotia series is considered by many the finest example of its kind, equalled only by the products of the English firm of Perkins, Bacon & Co. during the same period. But, if Canada produced

Sometimes, however, the artist is not so well served. Emanuel Hahn moulded a portrait of the Queen in low relief, then photographed it, but the engraver destroyed the conception by accentuating facial shadows. As a result the artist's design was hopelessly botched when this 4c stamp was issued in 1953





Two recent and successful stamps engraved after designs by Emanuel Hahn

classics, she also committed her share of artistic crimes, like the "Citizenship" and "Graham Bell" issues of 1947, crimes which only now are being lived down with the advent of the Hahn series of "wild life" stamps.

Emanuel Hahn, the well known Toronto sculptor now in his mid-seventies, is equally at home designing coinage, large monuments

and postage stamps. He also manufactures in his basement various kinds of home-made wine of a potency never considered possible by professional wine makers. His stamp designs have created a sort of renaissance in the field so far as North America is concerned and for the first time Canada can look at herself in international company without blushing.

With Canadian mail crossing every frontier, stamps are a form of goodwill and education not to be ignored. Fortunately, the Post Office Department has been conscious of competition from smaller, poorer countries with rich cultural traditions. This awareness and vision has resulted in a decided change for the better. How long this trend will continue is hard to say. There can be no question of turning back to the mediocre "paste-up-photo" era still fresh in our memory. Subjects other than wild life are waiting.

Continued on page 161

Nakamura — Painter on the Threshold

GEORGE ELLIOTT

LOOKING at pictures is as complex a pastime (or necessity) as you care to make it. You can be the viewer who feels simply that a picture is "nice". Or you can be the viewer who pits every picture he sees against a great grab-bag of art lore and history. There is an infinity of kinds of viewers between these extremes. That explains why there is a great deal of pigeon-holing of types, classes and groups in the painting world. It explains, partially, why a thread of continuity is necessary in the pursuit of the story of art. Painters and groups get some of their "understandability" when they are related to the continuity of art development.

At the moment, Toronto is observing the birth of a new group, Painters Eleven, that has as much cohesion as the Group of Seven ever had in its hey-day. Their pictures and their apparent views are as much out of sympathy with current art modes as were those of the Group of Seven 34 years ago. Six of the new group are commercial illustrators, as

were many of the members of the Group of Seven when it was founded.

There are two unfortunate differences between the new group and the old: the current social and economic condition is less conducive to public excitement or enthusiasm; the world is smaller than it was 34 years ago and what the new Canadian group calls progressive today has been seen time and time again in the world's larger metropolitan centres.

Art is a very public affair nowadays, whereas in the Group of Seven's day it was a semi-private affair. It took the shock of the Group to remove the patrician varnish. Today, so many of the public are in sympathy with the aims of the new group before it starts to exhibit that there is no particular shock value in their exhibiting together.

Nevertheless, there is a tenuous and elusive bond among its members who include Jack Bush, Oscar Cahén, Tom Hodgson, Alexandra Luke, Hortense Gordon, Ray Mead, William Ronald, Kazuo Nakamura, Harold Towne,

Walter Yarwood, J. W. G. Macdonald. The bond is romance in its dictionary meaning: a simple, imaginative fiction far removed from the objects of ordinary life. Just as the musical composer subordinates form to theme in a romantic composition, these painters subordinate representation to their personal notions of design, stress or movement.

Cahén juxtaposes two strident and therefore romantic colours in unworldly shapes on a nameless canvas with the hope that viewers will see the rightness and unchangeability of his design. Mead goes at the rectangle of canvas with lush colours but with a non-representational fetish of constructed shapes that is icily intellectual. Hodgson is a middle-of-the-roader because his canvases usually retain some recognizable aspects of the subject. Ronald has abandoned all realism and the germ of a Ronald canvas is often a momentary, intuitive flash of recognition,—recognition of a coincidence of colours, light and feeling. He is no less romantic than the others, because he often writes a poem to accompany the picture.

Quietly impressive in this new group is a young Canadian of Japanese descent, Kazuo Nakamura, who paints alternately intellectual exercises in design and extravagant romance landscapes of elegant good taste and high decorative value.

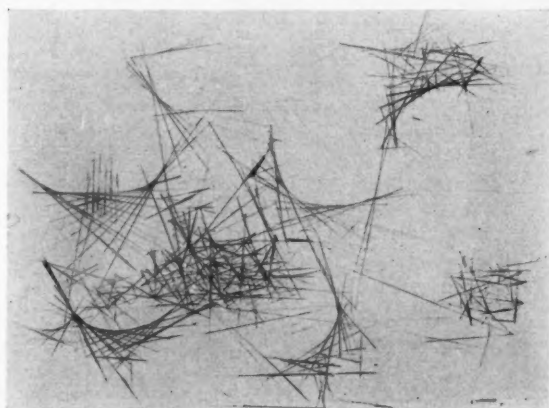
Nakamura's home was Vancouver until, when an adolescent, he accompanied his and other Japanese families to Tashme in the interior of British Columbia in 1942—a wartime security measure. Visually, Tashme was a twentieth-century phenomenon, composed as it was of efficient cubes of dwelling units marshalled in the shadow of great old mountains. A canvas painted at Tashme reveals nothing of the direction Nakamura took later. It is stiff, literal, uninteresting.

Nakamura's formal training began in Hamilton, Ontario, at that city's technical school. During the 1947-48 term, he took its night course in painting. Then he went to Toronto and enrolled in the three-year course at Central Technical School in 1948. His instructors were Charles Goldhamer, Doris McCarthy, Peter Haworth, Elizabeth Wyn Wood, Virginia Luz and Jocelyn Taylor.

While he was studying at "Central Tech" Nakamura exhibited publicly for the first time at Eaton's unaffiliated artists show of 1950. Of the two pictures, *Noon Shadows* and *Red Stools*, the latter displayed a mature confidence in composition. The following year, *Beach Statue*, a picture of a piece of driftwood, was accepted by the Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour. *Distant Valley* and *Swamp Trees* appeared in the 1952 Canadian Society of Graphic Art exhibition.

In November, 1952, he had his first one-man show at the Picture Loan Society. In 1953 he was in the Water Colour Society's exhibition, the Ontario Society of Artists and the Royal

KAZUO NAKAMURA. *Distant Valley. Ink*



KAZUO NAKAMURA. *Early Spring. Ink*





KAZUO NAKAMURA. *Still Life with Plants.* Water colour

KAZUO NAKAMURA. *Forest*



Canadian Academy. In September last year, the art committee of Hart House at the University of Toronto started its busy season of one-man showings with Nakamura. A month later, Simpson's department store, as part of a furniture-merchandising project, set aside space to show how easy it is to live with modern paintings. This venture was described in *Canadian Art*, Vol. XI, No. 2, and Nakamura was one of those whose works were presented in these room settings. His work was again on view this February when Roberts' Gallery opened a display of the new group's work. Simultaneously, Woodsworth House in Toronto held a one-man showing of his paintings.

Such a list looks like an auspicious beginning for Nakamura. However, his work has not yet made any concentrated impact on the public. Yet, particularly through his Hart House and Picture Loan Society exhibitions, he has begun to make his individuality felt in Toronto.

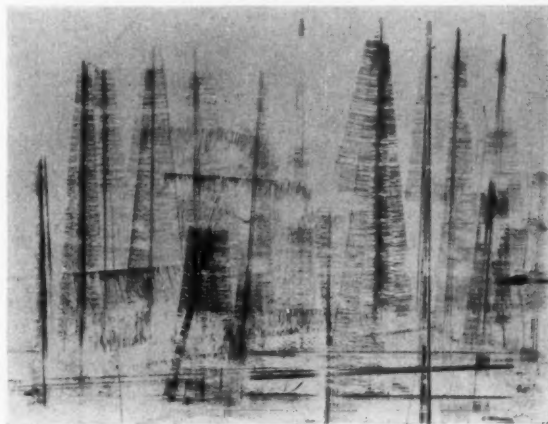
He has two recognizable sources of subject-matter. One is what might be called a racial instinct for landscape. The traditional Japanese fragility, precision, simplicity, also a certain airy romance in landscape painting is in his work, although it is not especially Japanese in appearance. The other is his way of looking at man-made devices. He doesn't particularly care to see the whole, preferring to see a fragment, an upright and beam in a building re-

peating themselves, a turn in a pipeline or iron steps at a railway station. These sources provide him with all the visual material he needs to create landscapes which are fanciful, mistily abstract, full of calligraphic charm.

Technically he is a simple painter, the simplicity coming from a process of "stripping down" the traditional encumbrances of painting. Currently he seems most concerned with making the unpainted portions of his paper do more of the work of perspective than paper has ever been asked to do before. Recently he has abandoned the brush in favour of razor blade, linoleum cutter, string, thread, wire screen and the edge of a piece of cardboard to apply his paint. For example, a picture of evergreen trees on the side of a hill was done by stretching paint-filled string on the paper and twirling the string to create the elongated cones of foliage. In another picture, a non-representational study, the sharp lines of bold colours that criss-cross with apparent indifference to design were applied with a razor blade.

Finding the razor blade too harsh in its result, Nakamura turned to a piece of cardboard, dipping its edge in the paint and applying it to a canvas treated with a base coat of flat white. The result is a simple landscape with great distance in it, trees, ploughed fields and a pervading feeling of delicacy and airiness.

KAZUO NAKAMURA. *Pine Forest. Ink*





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Colour in Architecture

B. C. BINNING

WE Canadians, we northern people, are at last using colour in architecture. It is the responsibility of the architect to see that colour is used well. Architecture is an exact and increasingly complex art. If the architect is to accomplish his whole task successfully he must draw upon the knowledge and talent of others. The artist has been able to help him in this way with colour. Though a colour vocabulary is essential, without some knowledge of architecture the artist is of little help to the architect.

The architect builds with a great variety of materials, many of which have a wide range of colour, texture and pattern. The choice of which material to use is not always dependent on structural or functional reasons but often concerned with the aesthetic requirements of the building. Thus, if the artist is to collaborate with the architect, both must begin with the conception of the building. The artist should refuse to be called upon at the last moment to pull a solution out of a hat. Colour, like any other element in architecture, should work its own way through the whole creative process. It is not an afterthought.

What are some of the things that the artist can do in order to accomplish what might be called an architectural use of colour?

First, the function of the building must be considered; it should be possible to evaluate the nature of its function in terms of colour. This is an everyday problem to the artist at his easel. Similarly, his colour vocabulary can be used to express the particular character of a building. The colour he uses for a cinema will certainly not be appropriate for a crematorium; the private and permanent character of a house is quite different from that of a busy and public bus station, or a school, shop, church, block of flats, office building, factory or hospital. Each presents a different problem and if the artist knows his job as a painter, he

can find answers in colour to these architectural equations.

The architect works in a similar way, finding his answers in mass, space and structure. Colour, texture and pattern are firmly part of these elements. In painting, the artist controls his major and secondary forms for certain compositional reasons and the handling of architectural mass should not be new to him. The soaring vertical and the reposed horizontal, the light transparent form and the solid monolithic chunk, the dynamic and static,—each requires its unique solution in colour.

The complement to mass is space. The play of walls, ceilings and floors (working as vertical and horizontal planes) decides the action of the space enclosed by them, whether it shall expand, confine, twist and turn, stop or flow. Colour will most certainly emphasize these special actions. Here again, the experienced painter is familiar with the power of colour to recede and come forward, to dissolve and stand firm. Every picture he paints is dependent upon colour to act in this way.

In order to create life and vitality within a building, the architect may choose to emphasize its structural system. The painter uses similar tensions and compressions to bring life and unity into his compositions. The bones and sinews of a building are, in another way, present in a good painting.

Finally, architecture is dominated by considerations of region and site. In spite of the so-called "international philosophy" of contemporary architecture, we are still a northern country; our Canadian painters have shown this to be true. Perhaps these painters can help the architect to create buildings which are more congenial to this Canadian light. The collaboration of architect and painter (and sculptor) is not new in the history of art and architecture. Whenever it has occurred, something of unique quality has been created. Perhaps this could happen again, and in Canada.

Opposite: The Dal Grauer Sub-station for the British Columbia Electric Company Limited, in Vancouver, B.C. Architects: Sharp and Thomson, Berwick, Pratt. Colour: B. C. Binning.



HANS MEMLING. *The Virgin and Child with St. Anthony and a Donor*

QUENTIN MASSYS
The Crucifixion



Canada Acquires Paintings from One of Europe's Noted Collections

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A GREAT European master, but rarely represented in North American collections, is that fine Flemish painter, Hans Memling. Until this year no examples of his work were in Canada and only a few in the United States. There was certainly nothing on this continent equal in importance to *The Virgin and Child with St. Anthony and a Donor*, the masterpiece which has now entered the collection of the National Gallery of Canada.

Those who have been to Bruges, where Memling painted during those years (1466–1494) when his art was in full flower, will recognize in the face of the Virgin in this picture an equal delicacy of portrayal to that of his famous *Madonna* in the Hospital Saint-Jean in Bruges. Certainly, this new Canadian acquisition is a treasure of Flemish art at its supreme level.

That Canada should have obtained it is an event of importance. Not only is it a large panel (the size is 37½ inches by 22 inches), but it is a panel, too, in which the detail is as exquisite in execution as the conception of the whole is harmonious.

The National Gallery has shown its initiative in going directly for its new purchases to Europe's most famous private collection, that of the Princes of Liechtenstein. Such opportunities are not common; only a few of the pictures the present Prince has inherited have been sold and most of these have come to Ottawa. Last year Canada obtained Rembrandt's *Bathsheba at Her Toilet* and the two panels by Filippino Lippi described in *Canadian Art*, Vol. XI, No. 1, and this year the Memling and four other works which are described below.

The Liechtensteins were an important Austrian family from the fifteenth century onwards. By the nineteenth century they had estates in various sections of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and several palaces in Vienna. In 1719, their principality of Liechtenstein, lying between Austria and Switzerland, had become fully recognized; it is still independent and its capital, Vaduz, is the seat of the present prince.

A sixteenth-century prince was the first to collect paintings. In the seventeenth century the head of the family, Karl Eusebius, bought up entire groups of paintings at a time and may



BARTEL BEHAM. *Portrait of a Bavarian Prince*



NICOLAES MAES

The Lace-maker

be considered the real founder of what is now the greatest European collection in private hands. In the eighteenth century, Prince Josef Wenzel, who served as Austrian ambassador in Paris, purchased works from the studios of great artists such as Chardin and published the first catalogue of the collection. Later, Prince Johann I consolidated the whole collection in the Garden Palace, Vienna, where it remained until the second world war; it was, for years, one of the great attractions of Vienna. Prince Johann II (1840-1929) further extended it; he appointed professional directors, published scholarly catalogues and made many additions. For some four hundred years the collection has been tended and carefully pruned by 15 generations of art-loving princes who devoted much of their energies and fortune to it.

Besides the Memling, four other paintings were acquired this year by the National Gallery from the Prince of Liechtenstein.

Another Flemish painter, almost of equal stature to Memling is Quentin Massys. His picture, *The Crucifixion*, was painted about 1520. It is remarkable not only for its expressive figures, but in particular for the minute precision in which he has depicted in the background his fanciful vision of the city of Jerusalem, with details partly based on Flemish architecture and partly on what Massys

imagined the antique to be like.

Northern realism is well represented in the *Portrait of a Bavarian Prince* by the sixteenth-century German painter, Bartel Beham, who was born in Dürer's city of Nuremberg.

The Lace-maker, by Nicolaes Maes (1634-1693), embodies much of the character of Dutch painting. Maes, who may be considered Rembrandt's best pupil, is at his best in intimate scenes such as this one of Dutch life in the seventeenth century.

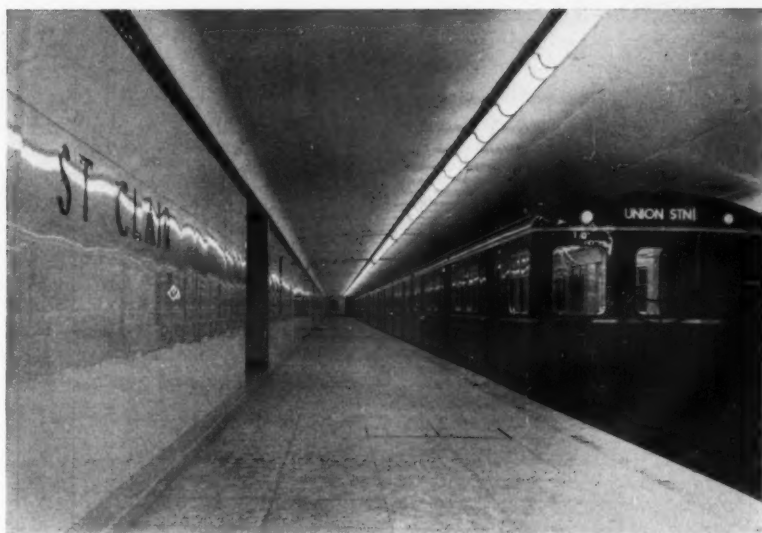
Last of the group in point of date is Francesco Guardi's *The Church of Santa Maria della Salute, Venice*. Guardi, with Canaletto, was the greatest of the eighteenth-century painters of Venetian scenes. Canaletto is already well represented in the National Gallery by several masterpieces of world renown. This, however, is the first Guardi painting to have been acquired. In this canvas, the Grand Canal is seen in the foreground with the domed Salute, best known of Venetian Baroque churches, to the right.

Of the many works still remaining in this great Austrian collection, there are, among other treasures, such rarities as a Leonardo da Vinci. Whether this or the others will ever be offered for sale is not known. It is to be hoped, however, that Canada will some day again be able to obtain other masterpieces from this same princely source.

FRANCESCO GUARDI. *The Church of Santa Maria della Salute, Venice*



Interior,
*St. Clair Avenue
Station, Toronto
Subway*



Design and Toronto's Subway

FRANK DAVIES

THERE are very good reasons for an article in *Canadian Art* on Canada's first subway and also for approaching it so obliquely as to link it with design; the reasons go back to events which started early in the first world war.

Until that time transport systems throughout the world had concentrated on their primary task,—that of moving people around more or less quickly, more or less efficiently and reasonably cheaper. It was a man of great vision who developed one such transport system into an almost legendary arbiter of taste, who made it a leader in industrial design, a patron of painters and sculptors, who helped it become a sincere and unpretentious cultural influence while fulfilling its function of public transportation with remarkable lack of fuss and frustration. The man of great vision was Frank Pick and the system was London Transport, particularly the London Underground.

Frank Pick looked at the chaos which the piecemeal growth of the organization had created and began his revolution by seizing on a detail and perfecting it. In 1916 he com-

missioned the greatest lettering artist of the day, Edward Johnston, to design a type suitable for the use of a vast transport undertaking. Johnston responded by producing his sans-serif face; simple and very legible, using classically proportioned letter forms. This was a dull and confused typographical period and it was Johnston's new type face which began a type renaissance that swept Europe and America and led to several of the types we use today (such as *Futura* in which the heading of this article is set). With his *Johnston sans-serif* Frank Pick achieved an immediate coherence in all the station-indicators, tickets, timetables, wording on coaches, posters, advertisements and so on. This policy of not being satisfied with the readily available but by commissioning the best possible has been continued into every facet of the organization. The responsibility for design is placed at the very highest level, with the chairman of the board himself, and that gives a continuity and confidence which could never be obtained from some minor official or by committee decision. The results have been dramatically

successful. The influence of London Transport cannot be omitted from any study of industrial design in this century. One instance will serve,—at the Museum of Modern Art in New York a recent exhibition showed the London Transport bar-and-circle symbol as one of the best examples of street signs of today. The symbol began to evolve over forty years ago; its simplicity keeps it above mere passing changes of fashion.

Neither can the influence of London Transport be omitted from any study of art patronage in this century. On its headquarters building at St. James's Park station are sculptures by Sir Jacob Epstein, Eric Gill and Henry Moore; its posters have literally brought the man in the street into contact with contemporary art through the work of poster designers such as Fred Taylor, Tom Eckersley, Abram Games and illustrators such as Edward Bawden, Rex Whistler, Barnett Freedman, John Minton, of painters as varied as Graham Sutherland and Sir Frank Brangwyn or Paul Nash and Dame Laura Knight. McKnight Kauffer was one of the many unknowns who first appeared on Underground posters. With occasional lapses the standard has been amazingly high.

When Toronto carefully studied other subway systems it was no coincidence that the

London Underground was the pattern it chose to follow. Many years of scrupulous attention to detail and continuous experiment in all the technical problems were at Toronto's disposal and it made excellent use of it. No other subway system in the world has started off so well equipped. The cars were built by a firm long experienced in building for London Underground and the Toronto engineers are to carry out further experiments with cars of aluminum construction. In its attention to details Toronto has been conscientious and ingenious; sound and vibration are minimized by special paint, rubber and cork flooring, welded continuous rails; special lighting fixtures have been developed, and so on.

On the larger scale the stations themselves are clever solutions to many local problems. They are clean, bright, attractive; architecturally acceptable to the contemporary-minded and yet unlikely to rouse any protest from traditionalists. It is not too early to believe that all the preliminary snags—such as too many stairs—will be efficiently cleared up and that improvements will be continually made as the system grows.

What Toronto has not apparently been able to recognize, in its acceptance of London's lead, is that London Transport is not a matter of mere technical efficiency. It is a matter of

An entrance exterior of the Toronto Subway





The author cites the London Transport bar-and-circle symbol (left) as "one of the best examples of street signs of today", but he finds the Toronto Subway's symbol (below) "reminiscent, if of anything, of bad lighting fixtures of the thirties."

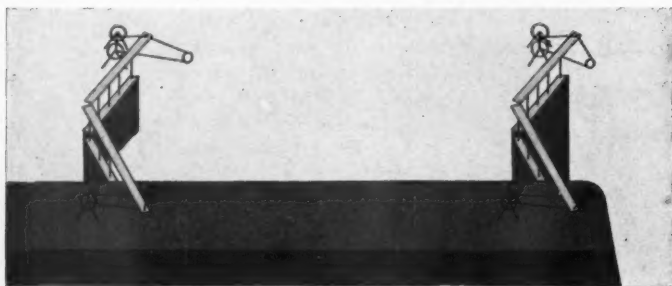
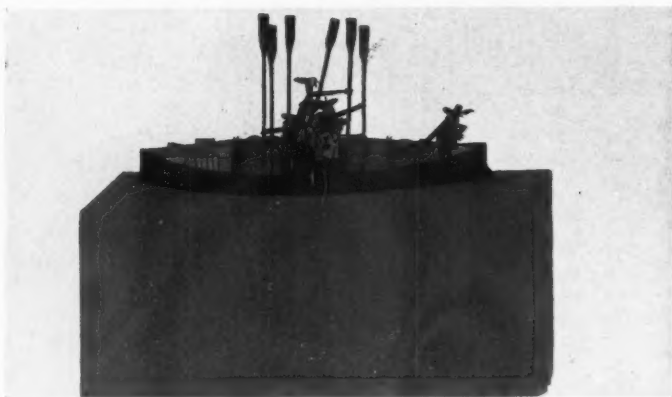
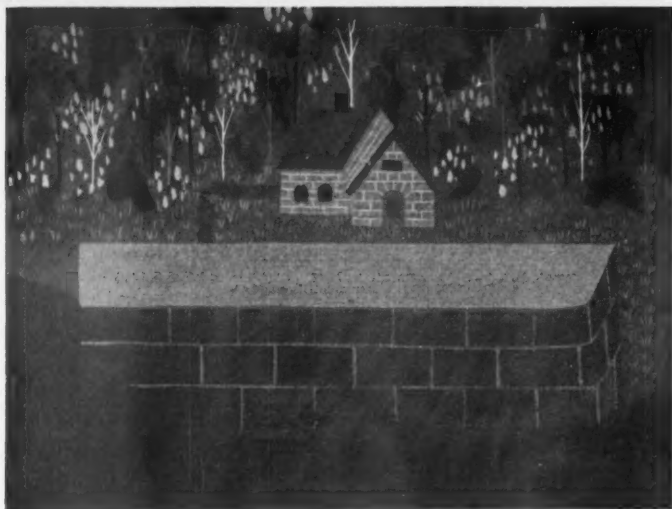


A London Transport poster



inspiration and courage, and the Subway, beyond its original conception, shows little of these qualities. The Subway symbol is quaint; it is reminiscent, if of anything, of bad lighting fixtures of the thirties. It contains an amateurish monogram, illegible and clumsy. The whole thing is frankly a mistake and should be discreetly withdrawn. A symbol more worthy of present achievements and future aspirations should be commissioned from Canadian designers.

It is too soon to know whether the Subway will contribute much to the rapid growth of Canadian design, or will be able, or willing, to call on Canada's artists. It is not too soon to begin working towards that. The Subway could be a unique opportunity for setting a standard for design in Canada for the second half of this century. It will be with us for a long, long time and it will be a pity if we find, as the years pass, that all we have is a dull old-fashioned system for shuttling crowds back and forth instead of an exciting contribution to city living in which we are all proud to share.



Making an Animated Film

THE ROMANCE OF TRANSPORTATION

Production

National Film Board of Canada

Script

Wolf Koenig, Roman Kroiter,
Colin Low, Robert Verrall

Animation

Wolf Koenig, Robert Verrall,
Colin Low, assisted by Sidney
Goldsmith and Barrie Helmer

Photography

Lyle Enright

Music

Eldon Rathburn

Sound Editing

Ken Heeley-Ray

Sound Recording

Clarke Daprato

Commentator

Guy Glover

Producer

Tom Daly

PRODUCED by the National Film Board of Canada in 1952, *The Romance of Transportation* is an animation film. For those not familiar with the term "animation", it may be said here that it refers to film action made with drawings, as distinct from film action made with "live" photography. Comic animation films are usually called "cartoons"; *The Romance of Transportation* has been called a cartoon, much to our delight.

Animation, if properly used, has the power to simplify, to deal easily with essentials. It can, for instance, relate events of many historical periods and of isolated places.

This subject, the history of transportation in Canada, first appealed to us because we thought we could depict stage-coaches, sailing ships, early trains, and other fascinating machines now rarely, if ever, seen, and have them move through the landscapes of their own period.

So we began the script or "storyboard" (a series of rough sketches indicating the continuity to be used). Then someone asked *what* is the history of transportation in Canada all about? Is it only about all the vehicles involved? Or also about the people who use them? This question changed our whole approach to the subject and, we think, lent the film humour.

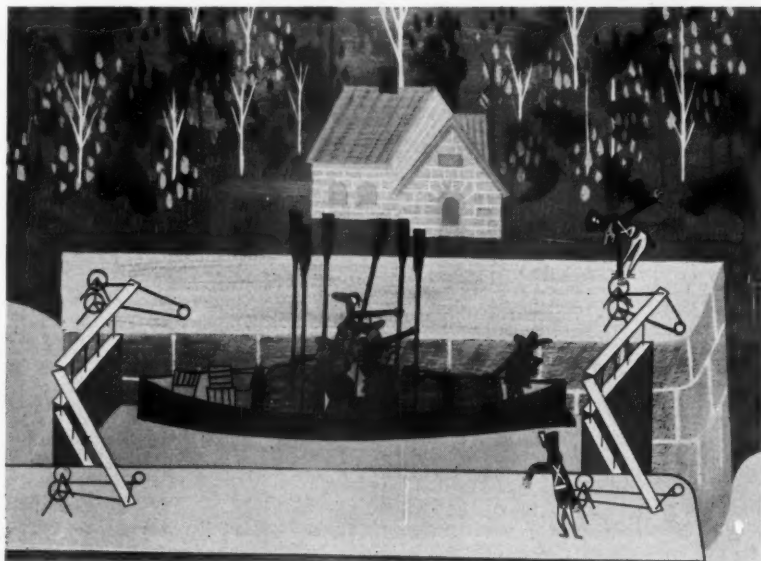
Four main characters, struggling with the problems of travel, appear throughout the film. There is the adventurer, who is all exuberance. He is the one who breaks new

ground; in doing so he often tangles with the others accidentally. There is the more conservative man, practical but very pugnacious. He consolidates gains. The third man, the policeman, simply wants things to go smoothly with as few accidents as possible. The fourth is the commentator (the voice on the sound track); he is an historian, perhaps a little too devoted to generalizations about his subject. He is totally unaware of what is taking place on the screen. While the action on the screen was intended to illustrate his lecture, it is impossible to illustrate literally a generalization. So the visuals proceed to show what might have happened or what might still happen; they suggest that the behaviour of people and their fellow creatures is often unpredictable and cannot be always related to the summarizations of the historian.

The four main characters in the film are never very evident as such, with the exception perhaps of the commentator. In fact, I'm sure that an audience is hardly aware of their existence. It wasn't really our intention that they should be. But it was necessary for us to think of them as characters in order to imagine how they might behave in any given situation.

After completing the "storyboard", it seemed to us that the film would not only be useful in schools but that a movie-going audience might like it. So we shot it on 35mm film, from which good 16mm prints can be made for non-theatrical release, in the hope that Columbia Pictures of Canada would dis-

A frame from the film *The Romance of Transportation* and the four drawings or "cels" (opposite) which were made to create it. This film, in its French version, was given the first award for animated short pictures in the Sixth International Film Festival at Cannes, France. The film also received other awards in Brussels, Edinburgh and elsewhere.



tribute it as one of the films in the "Canada Carries On" series which appear once a month in commercial theatres. We were very happy when they agreed to take it.

The technique we used is called "cel animation", ("cel" meaning celluloid). There were other possible techniques, but this one we felt would best suit the variety of situation and action we had in mind.

This technique can be described as follows. A series of drawings are made on paper of the different positions an object takes in moving from one place to another. They are then traced on to sheets of celluloid with ink or paint, then colour is added. The action must be carefully designed to fit the background which is placed behind the "cels" when they are ready to be photographed. The camera used is especially designed to take one picture or "frame" at a time. Each "cel" is photographed in proper order on to the strip of

film. It is possible when drawing to gauge the speed of action quite accurately. In one second of time, 24 pictures or "frames" on a strip of motion picture film are projected on a screen. By working out the action in seconds of time, the artist can discover how many separate drawings will be required. It is possible to have action on four, sometimes even more, levels of "cel" at one time. This is done by means of drawings such as those shown here in the illustrations of the canal lock grouping. Combined with backgrounds that move, the possibilities for animation seem infinite.

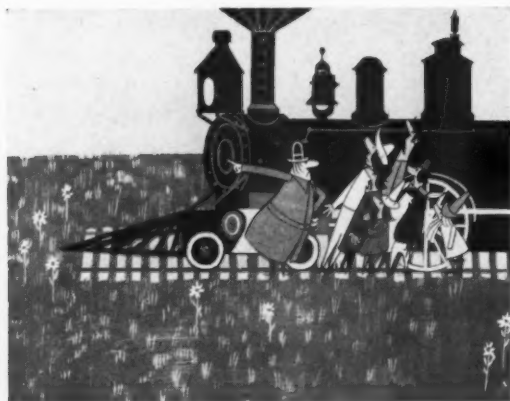
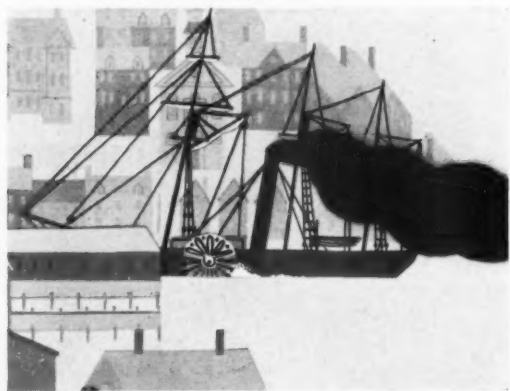
The animation was mostly the work of three of us. We had to divide the work, but we wanted this division to enhance rather than destroy the style. One of us drew and "animated" all of the characters in the film. Two of us collaborated on the design and painting of the backgrounds.

Assisting these three, were two other persons who transferred the drawings from paper to celluloid (a job called "inking and painting") and did the animation of special effects like smoke and explosives. Still others made important contributions to the film, in camera work and editing, in the commentary, the sound effects and the music.

The film was created by individuals working together in a group; it was made possible by the existence of a film organization. The realization that the history of transportation in Canada is not only about the evolution of vehicles and travelling machines but is also about people was uppermost in the minds of those who made the film and helps, we feel, to explain the extent of its success.

ROBERT VERRALL

*Three frames from the film,
The Romance of Transportation*



ELIZABETH SUTHERLAND

Sissyboo

Collection:

Mrs. Miller Brittain



Painters of New Brunswick

AVERY SHAW

IN A brief article, it is impossible to sum up the qualities which distinguish our New Brunswick painters, since they each deserve special attention. The sensitivity, refinement and broad knowledge of Jack Humphrey, the blazing personal mythology of Miller Brittain in his most recent phase, the feminine vitality of Julia Crawford, Fred Ross's draughtsmanship, William Martell's fastidious textures and Ted Campbell's accomplished water colours, these are all personal contributions each speaking with a personal voice. The classically pure forms of Alex Colville's painting are another. The poetry of Lucy Jarvis's landscapes is in complete contrast to the ruthless humanism of Elizabeth Sutherland and to the skilled design of Violet Gillett. This, of course, is desirable, for the individuality of an artist is his most valuable asset.

During the war years, a large part of the New Brunswick Museum was taken over by government departments. They did not move out until late in 1948. Temporary partitions were then taken down, the King George VI Hall was redecorated, and it was possible to expand museum services.

At the beginning of 1949 our art depart-

ment commenced a series of one-man exhibitions, which aimed to present the most talented artists of New Brunswick. For this the title "Know Your Own Artists" seemed appropriate. Since that time we have hung, in the order named, 10 exhibitions showing the works of Miller Brittain, Ted Campbell, Julia Crawford, Violet Gillett, Jack Humphrey, Lucy Jarvis, Fred Ross, Alex Colville, Elizabeth Sutherland and, finally, Jack Humphrey's recent work painted in France. This last was remarkable for its range of experimentation and freshness. The catalogues for each exhibition are accompanied by a brief biography and the paintings are for sale.

The usual procedure has been to introduce the artists themselves at the opening of their exhibitions so that they could explain and discuss their work. This is an ordeal which they have met more than adequately, since we have found that they are articulate, even eloquent, in stating their aims and philosophy.

The choice of artists was determined by their relationship to New Brunswick and the Maritimes; resident artists were presented first. Elizabeth Sutherland, although living in Montreal, is a product of Saint John. During this



JULIA CRAWFORD. *Befogged.* Water colour

JACK HUMPHREY. *Renforth Wharf.* Gouache



period we have by no means confined our exhibitions to the painters of New Brunswick, but other artists have not been included in the "Know Your Own Artists" series.

For a good many years the writer has been attempting to find reasons for the exceptional number of fine painterly talents in the province and particularly in the Saint John area. As far as is known, there is nothing comparable in any other smaller Canadian city. Sunday painters are everywhere, but no other community with our population can boast of so many serious professional artists, accomplished and dedicated to their work. How this came about is puzzling. Perhaps the visual stimulus of the city, with its broken terrain and endlessly varying vistas, may be a factor.

We plan to present new phases of each artist's work and also to recognize new talents as they develop. Of the promising younger artists of the province William Martell in Saint John and John Maxwell in Fredericton are showing unusual accomplishment. Miller Brittain in his new approach to painting reveals an outstanding visionary force; his new work will soon be seen in the series.



MILLER BRITTAI. *Pieta. Pastel and gouache*



LUCY JARVIS. *Fish-house Garden*
The New Brunswick Museum

The Dominion Gallery is known throughout Canada, the United States and Europe for its outstanding selection of Canadian paintings. On sale are works by more than 150 Canadian artists.

Dr. Max Stern's collection of Old Masters is less familiar to the Canadian public. Some of them come from his late father who began to collect at the end of the last century. Many of these hang today in museums in Canada and the United States.

The portrait of Abbot Ingenray painted in 1535 by Mabuse is in the Detroit Institute of Arts and it is of interest to know that a painting by Hercules Seghers and one by Lucas van Leyden were exhibited at the New York World Fair in 1939. There are also some in museums in England, Holland, Germany and other countries.

In order to give the public an opportunity to see and to acquire these paintings, a few will be displayed in the general exhibition rooms of the Dominion Gallery, which are open to the public during the summer from Monday to Friday from 9.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Dominion Gallery

1438 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal

THE FEDERATION OF CANADIAN ARTISTS

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CONTRIBUTORS

Laurence Hyde is well known for his wood engravings. He lives in Ottawa and works at the National Film Board of Canada.

B. C. Binning of Vancouver is an artist who has always shown a creative interest in architecture.

Frank Davies, M.S.I.A., is an English designer who recently left London, England, to work in Toronto.

Avery Shaw is curator of art at the New Brunswick Museum, Saint John, N.B.

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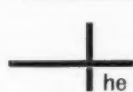
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Coast to Coast in Art

In honour of the memory of H. S. Southam, C.M.G., former Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Canada, who died in March of this year, Canadian Art reproduces this portrait by F. H. Varley from the National Gallery's collection

The Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery of Regina College

Regina's new art gallery has now been open for almost a year. Known as the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, it has been built as an extension to Regina College. The funds required for constructing the building (it cost \$65,000) and a collection of antiques and of works by European artists, including some interesting drawings and a few paintings by old masters, were left to the college by the late Norman Mackenzie, K.C. Additional gifts for the permanent collection have recently been added, for example, a Corot landscape. Funds are not yet available for acquisitions of Canadian art, but it is hoped these will soon be forthcoming. The curator is Richard B. Simmins.

The gallery consists of an entrance hall and one large room, measuring 60 feet by 30 feet. By the use of portable panels wall space can be increased for special displays.

Exhibitions change about every twelve days during the academic term; the majority are obtained through the Western Canada Art Circuit. Provincial and municipal exhibitions are also encouraged, while educational talks are given throughout the year.

Canadians in Mexico

Canadian artists continue to work and study in Mexico in increasing numbers. Two Quebec artists have been attracting attention there recently. Alberto Tommi from Percé has just executed a large mural painting in vinylite in the cathedral of San Miguel de Allende, while Suzanne Guité, also from Percé, has been honoured with an exhibition held in San Miguel of her recent sculpture.

Art on Main Street

A fresh approach to art publicity was recently tried out by the Saanich Community Art Centre in British Columbia. This organization draws its membership from a semi-rural area, the main trading centre of which is Sidney, B.C., a town of about a thousand inhabitants, 15 miles from Victoria. Early this year it persuaded the merchants on the main street of Sidney to display, in their show-windows, examples of the work of members of the Art Centre. This venture proved most successful.

Many new members were attracted to the Centre, but better still, the merchants themselves became enthusiastic supporters. As one of them said, "For the first time since I started in

business, I've had something to talk about with the man across the street that wasn't tied up somehow with business."

Group of Seven Exhibition in Vancouver

Though the occasional Group of Seven painting is to be seen in Vancouver, and though the story of this Canadian art movement is told even in B.C. elementary school text-books, people there had their first opportunity to see an exhibition devoted entirely to the theme this spring. The Vancouver Art Gallery brought together 80 works, paintings and sketches, borrowed from 19 sources, and representing the 11 painters associated with the Group. Many of the paintings, like Thomson's *Jack Pine*, Lismer's *Isles of Spruce*, MacDonald's *Solemn Land*, were the large important pictures from well-known Canadian collections. What was reassuring was to find that these pictures although familiar (if only through reproduction) had not lost their impact. The most sophisticated spectator could scarcely fail to thrill to the sense of excitement and adventure of these men, literally discovering, in their own terms, a country,—their country, for the first time. And by far the best paintings in the exhibition were those produced by the artists active in the movement from the start when the spirit of discovery was so strong. For many, the appeal of the show had an added sharpness as they realized that the time for such a simple, direct statement of values as the Group achieved has passed, not to be wilfully recalled.

Architect-Artist Co-operation

It is encouraging to discover continuing examples of co-operation between architect and artist in Vancouver. A number of murals are under way on both public and private buildings. To mention only two, Lionel Thomas is working on a large mural in McCarter & Nairne's new building for Imperial Oil; John Korner has just completed a 35 foot long mural for the residence of Douglas Simpson of Semmens and Simpson, Architects. Local craftsmen in metal, ceramics and wood carving are being employed to execute decoration for the new building for the British American Oil Company in Vancouver. There are, too, an increasing number of cases where artists have been employed as colour consultants on buildings from power stations to schools and residences.

Canada's International Trade Fair

There was great improvement this June in the design of the various Canadian exhibits in Canada's International Trade Fair in Toronto. The prestige displays presented by the Province of

Manitoba and the Province of Newfoundland were, in particular, good of their kind. Canadian designers, however, still have much to learn when it comes to lettering. None of our displays could match those from Austria in this respect.

One does not expect to come upon fine art in a trade fair. How pleasing, therefore, to find that the Port of Saint John, N.B., had the initiative to commission one of that city's leading artists, Miller Brittain, to paint a mural to embellish its information booth. This bold and brightly outlined panorama of the Saint John waterfront was quite successfully executed, although obviously prepared with a little too much dash and speed.

Detroit Institute of Arts Opens New French Canadian Room

The Institute of Arts continues to add to its collection of early French-Canadian painting and decorative art. One room devoted to this subject was installed a few years ago and now a second room has been opened which is furnished to give the feeling of a house in eighteenth-century French Detroit, when that centre was still a frontier settlement of New France. Almost all of the items shown are from Quebec and were made between 1750 and 1850. A long wooden bench, painted yellow, occupies one wall. In the centre stands a four-poster cradle of birch, bringing a note of intimacy to the room.

Recent acquisitions include a church ornament of Easter lilies, of carved wood and wire, painted naturalistically in green, white and yellow; this is reproduced on the contents page of this number. Equally interesting are a pair of silver cruets of simple, classical form, the work of Laurent Amiot of Quebec (1764-1839), reproduced below.



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NEW BOOKS ON THE ARTS

GEORGE GROSZ. By John I. H. Baur. 67 pp.; 40 black and white plates + 2 in colour. New York: Published for the Whitney Museum of American Art by The Macmillan Company. (Canadian Distributors: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, Toronto). \$3.50.

This small book is the result of a retrospective exhibition of the works of George Grosz, 120 paintings and drawings, held by the Whitney Museum of American Art in January and February 1954. The first 10 plates deal with his early outstanding work, done in Germany, the rest with his attempts to find a new way of expression during his struggle to become an American citizen.

Mr. Baur, Curator of the Whitney Museum of American Art, who has written extensively on both nineteenth- and twentieth-century American painting, has succeeded in psychoanalysing George Grosz, and has given, even in this narrow outline, an interesting account of the schizophrenia of the painter. George Grosz is known, and perhaps will always be known, for his work in his early life, the first forty years. Then he knew his goal. He looked around, and his clear eye, sharp observation, cool mind and steady hand held up a mirror to the self-centred, perverse, selfish and complacent society surrounding him. His biting satire was true and brilliant, expressed in his sharp, merciless and cruel drawings. Such works as

Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse (The Face of the Ruling Classes) 1919; *Ecce Homo*, 1922; *Spiesserspiegel* (Mirror of the Bourgeoisie), 1924; and *Ueber alles die Liebe* (Love above all), 1931 will always acclaim his great talent and courage and make him the most famous of the satirists of that generation.

One feels that Mr. Baur's attempt to explain George Grosz's change of mind—the desire to burn all his bridges to the past, his peculiar behaviour to redeem himself, to remake his art, to transform himself into an American, his doubts, his profound pessimism, his steady struggle for new expressions, his lost faith, his frustrations and his fears—is a fine and imaginative literary piece of work, but it does not leave the impression that George Grosz has become a new and refined artist, reborn in America. One rather feels that Grosz has needed a very long period to adjust himself and that, in his groping and constant dividing and forking, in his running off into dead-end alleys, in his waiting for the spirits to rise from the deep pit, he has fallen in love with his own nightmare visions and fears and has painted pictures of sentimental and melodramatic effusion.

His macabre, gruesome tales, his mixed memories, the unidentified debris in his paintings seem to need the clever explanation and skilful literary content Mr. Baur uses to give light and direction, but one is left with the thought that if such explanation is



needed the pictures would be a failure or make little sense without it. Finally, we all know, painting and drawing is only great art when literature cannot compete. In the picture, *The Painter of the Hole*, George Grosz himself shows his utter frustration in that he has nothing to say any more, that he is empty, that he has spent himself.

It is an interesting book, with a short but very readable text, and very good illustrations printed in the finest gravure, and should be a welcome addition to the many first rate books on the work and life of George Grosz.

F. BRANDTNER

MODERN INDIAN PAINTING. By Ramachandra Rao. xlv + 138 pp., numerous black and white plates + 22 in colour. Madras: Rachana. Rs. 37/8/-

To Western viewers the most obvious characteristic of contemporary Indian painting is its tentative quality. It has not yet made up its mind how much it will accept or can digest of post-impressionism and the School of Paris. It has not yet succeeded in assimilating its own tradition—the great touchstone to which the present must continually be referred and the symbol of which is the Ajanta frescoes.

Contemporary Indian art suffers from the same ambivalence of outlook toward the West that distinguishes Indian politics and social mores. It may be summed up in the immortal words of the poet Catullus to his mistress: *odi et amo*. It is still difficult for Indian painting to take the West in its stride without pausing for self-examination and picking at the cuticle of national self-consciousness. Nevertheless, for all this lack of synthesis, the achievement is im-

pressive, and it was time that someone gave us a look at it in compendious and well-dressed form. Dr. Rao has done this. He has discussed the last half-century of Indian painting in its historical and social context and has related outstanding figures to their times. He has written in a lucid, discerning prose style, and has presented his thoughts in a pleasing, indeed for India a sumptuous, format, with a wealth of black and white illustrations, sufficient colour plates to enable us to see what we are about, and a summary in French.

But this gesture is not likely to make Western critics judge contemporary Indian art less severely. Nor is this result likely to be achieved by the fact that Dr. Rao is quite unsparing of local sacred cows in the Indian art world, and indeed is so bold as to question the influence of E. B. Havell, to dismiss the Bengal School as full of "sentimental irrelevancies" and to greet that other great Bengali painter, Jamini Roy, as "a cathartic corrective."

The reason for this lack of Western appreciation may be found in the cultural gap in India which existed for about two hundred years from the decline of the Rajput miniaturists and the delicate Kangra School of painting in the Himalaya, and which covers roughly the period of British rule. It is fashionable in India to blame the British for the decline, but Dr. Rao does not take this easy way out. He recognizes that while the importing of British manufactured goods may have had something to do with the decline of village crafts—Jaipur enamel work, Farrukhabad prints, Benares brassware and brocades, Bangalore silks and Trichuri rushwork—the sad fact is that creative endeavour failed in India chiefly because of the reduction of the country to political and social anarchy following the decline of the Moghuls and the destructive Maratha wars. Indeed, it can be argued that it was not until two Englishmen, Lord Curzon and E. B. Havell, turned India's own eyes inward to an appreciation of its great past, and India found in the late Ananda Coomaraswamy a brilliant interpreter of its art and philosophy to the West, that Indian painting began to pick itself up off its back.

It is possible to draw a very rough parallel between Indian and Canadian art, though it concerns an attitude of mind rather than a school of painting. Both countries, in feeling the surge of their new nationalism, needed a form of creative expression. The Bengal School, in the period approximately 1905 to 1925, really tried to do for India what the Group of Seven tried to do for Canada: that is, to return to the Indian scene for inspiration, which in this case was symbolized in the majestic Buddhist rock paintings of the Ajanta Caves in Hyderabad. The Bengal group, with which are associated the names of the three Tagore brothers, the school which they founded at Santiniketan and the work of Nandalal Bose, had run its course by the early twenties. It was against its rather feeble decorative art, effeminate and lacking in structure, reminding one of the *art nouveau* expressions of Edmund Dulac and Arthur Rackham at the turn of the century, that the modern

Indian painters rebelled. Their rebellion took two forms: first, in the case of Jamini Roy, a deliberate return to folk art, and secondly, in the case of the younger painters born since about 1914, an attempt to assimilate Ajanta on the one hand and the School of Paris on the other, and to synthesize them with the painter's personal feelings.

In making up a list of these painters it is possible that all one reveals is that a Westerner can best understand contemporary Indian painting if it partakes to some extent of the West in its approach and techniques. However, the world today is one place and no country can remain completely outside the stream of international contemporary painting. It happens that this stream developed first in Western Europe, but part of its inspiration lies in the East: the Japanese prints of Hokusai and Hiroshige; the bronzes of Java; the Jaipur miniatures, and the terracotta and stone figurines of the Gupta period.

Of the younger Indian painters today there are a number whose work is highly stimulating and effective: N. S. Bendre and M. F. Hussain with their rich texture and their sense of grace in the human figure; George Keyt with his violent linear rhythms; Gopal Ghose with his thin precise understatement; Sailoz Mukherjee with his slithery line and light sunny touch which seems to remind some people of Matisse; K. Srinivasulu with his highly stylized painting, less rigid and more flexible than that of Roy. These are simply the leaders in a loose group of art movements throughout India which are today in full ferment. It appears, however, that only one artist has so far succeeded completely in fusing Ajanta and the School of Paris with her own vivid vision of contemporary India, and that is Amrita Sher-Gil (1914-1941).

In her tragically short life, "cut off in a broken arc of resplendent achievement", as Dr. Rao poetically puts it, she recreated the architectural rhythms, the plastic design and the atmosphere of the Buddhist frescoes. Dr. Rao pays a sensitive tribute to Amrita Sher-Gil, speaking of "the monumental simplicity and vitality" of her art. She is represented in his book by four black and white reproductions, but most unfortunately, since as she herself observed "colour is my domain", not by a reproduction in colour: Undoubtedly some of the excitement that a Westerner feels for her work is due to the com-

plete and moving synthesis of Indian inspiration with a superb Western technique, the whole irradiated by a sure sense of composition and a daring use of great areas of bold, bright colour. In her, contemporary Indian painting reached a brief but dazzling peak, up which others are still trying to climb.

GRAHAM MCINNES

NEW STAMPS FOR OLD

Continued from page 136

Canadian history can be dealt with in as fine a manner as the Swedish Government dealt with Swedish history on stamps produced twenty or thirty years ago. Some of these fine stamps were engraved in Ottawa by the British American Bank Note Company from Swedish designs. In these stamps Sweden demonstrated how the peculiar demands of steel engraving can be met with art work tailored to the medium. Here is no vulgar insistence on photographic likeness but a civilized awareness of good design plus respect for the engraver and his tools. Here is no question of competition from any other medium. Only a steel engraved plate could possibly do justice to the artist's conception, conceived as it was in terms of the engraved plate. Hahn's designs

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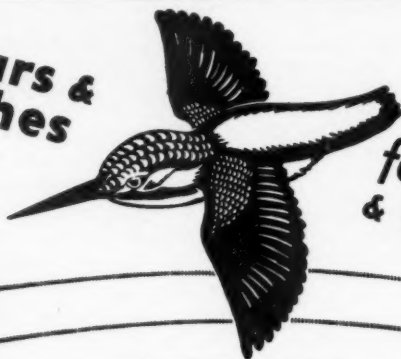
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